

# The Auriga Academy Trust

## **GIFT Receiving and Giving POLICY**

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Please note that all Trust policies are reviewed regularly. Should you have any queries regards this policy, note an omission or wish to propose an amendment, please email [hr@aurigaacademytrust.org.uk](mailto:hr@aurigaacademytrust.org.uk).

## 1. Overview

This outlines the Trust's policy with regard to the receipt of gifts by its employees from any third parties arising from duties undertaken on behalf of the Trust or its Schools. The definition of gift includes hospitality. This policy should read alongside The Auriga Academy Trust **Code of Conduct**.

The Trust is committed to ensuring that the governance of the Trust is conducted in accordance with the highest standards of integrity, probity and openness. The Trust encourages and expects staff and trustees to use their networks and contacts for its benefit. It is however a fundamental requirement, that they must not derive any financial benefits, beyond their agreed salary, from decisions they make or contribute to.

Financial gain from decisions involving the education of pupils or the spending of significant sums from the Trust or a school's budget would be considered to be gross misconduct. Therefore staff and trustees **MUST NOT** use their authority or office for personal gain and will demonstrate that all financial decisions have due regard to propriety and regularity.

## 2. General Gift and Hospitality **RECEIVING** Rules

Staff must not receive gifts, hospitality or benefits of any kind from a third party which might be seen to compromise their personal judgement or integrity.

Staff are asked to immediately report any offer or receipt of such gifts to Trust HR, using the following link <https://forms.office.com/e/bY0hEiBhVq>. The information submitted will be recorded on the Trust's Register of Gifts and Hospitality which is maintained by Trust HR on O365 Forms.

In exercising judgement as to whether to accept a gift or hospitality, staff should consider what the public perception would be if the information was published given their role and circumstances. As a general guideline, business gifts and hospitality should not be accepted by any member of staff, except as provided for below. If there is any uncertainty Trust HR should be contacted ([HR@aurigaacademytrust.org.uk](mailto:HR@aurigaacademytrust.org.uk)) so that a decision can be made to safeguard the interests of all parties.

Governors and staff may accept the following gifts/ hospitality without the need to seek the approval of the Trust / school or formally register receipt:

- Free hospitality at business lunches/dinners or attendance in an official capacity at a public function.
- Incidental promotional gifts such as calendars, diaries or pens.
- Receipt of small items from students, students' families, members of the public, suppliers or contractors as expressions of gratitude such as boxes of chocolate or individual bottles of drink (at a value of less than £25).

The following examples of gifts/hospitality require approval and **MUST** be formally recorded by Trust HR in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality:

- Attendance as a non-paying guest of a commercial organisation or individual at a non-work related cultural or sporting event (at a value of more than £25).
- Promotional gifts worth in excess of £25.

Care must always be taken to ensure that whenever such gifts/hospitality are accepted no obligation to the person or organisation in question is accepted. Gifts should not be accepted if they appear to be disproportionately generous or could be viewed as an inducement to influence a decision or action, whether business, educational or otherwise. If not accepting a gift would be regarded as causing offence (such as a sudden and unexpected gift or one where refusal could cause cultural offence) the item should be accepted. The matter should then be brought to the attention of Trust HR as soon as possible, who may decide to return the

gift, or may donate it to a school raffle/fair or a charitable cause. In cases of doubt staff should consult Trust HR ([HR@aurigaacademytrust.org.uk](mailto:HR@aurigaacademytrust.org.uk)).

For transparency, any personal interest that may impact, or be seen to impact, on an employee's impartiality, or conflict with the duty owed to the Trust / school in any matter relevant to an employee's duties **MUST** be declared in writing as per the Code of Conduct. Declarations should be made to Trust HR using the following link: <https://forms.office.com/e/BafJ0X50Hk>. The information submitted will be recorded on the Trust's Register of Interests which is stored on O365 Forms.

The same principal applies to governors and trustees, as per the Academy Trust Handbook, these declarations will be stored on Governor Hub.

Any employee who becomes aware of a breach of policy must refer to the Trust **Code of Conduct** and report the alleged breach immediately to the CEO / Headteacher who will instigate investigations as necessary.

### **3. Unacceptable Gifts / Hospitality**

The following are examples of offers of gifts/hospitality which **MUST be refused** by staff:

- Gifts of money (excluding donations to the Trust / school).
- Free membership or subscriptions (e.g. sports clubs).
- Foreign travel unless as a specific element of a business, academic or research activity approved by the Trust.
- Free goods, services or equipment which are normally provided by a supplier to the Trust / school at a charge.

Any offers of gifts and hospitality falling into any of the above categories should be reported immediately to Trust HR.

## **4. Gifts and Hospitality GIVING Rules**

### **4.1 Gifts to Staff**

Staff must be mindful that the value of all gifts and hospitality offered by the Trust / school are sourced from public funding, and the expectation is that such funding will be used for legitimate purposes and demonstrate value for money.

In exceptional circumstances it may be appropriate for the Trust / school to provide a gift of up to £30 in value. The Trust / school must be able to demonstrate that these gifts are funded from unrestricted funds generated by the Trust / school. Exceptional circumstances could include sending a bouquet of flowers to a seriously ill employee, or to a longstanding employee who is retiring (the cost of a bouquet should not exceed £40).

Gifts and hospitality should not be provided as a thank you for a 'job well done'.

### **4.2 Gifts to Third Parties**

It is not expected that the Trust / schools will give gifts to third parties other than potentially the provision of refreshments at meetings. It is acceptable for the Trust / school to provide modest hospitality in the way of working lunches and / or dinners to existing and potential contractors and stakeholders subject to a genuine business reason.

If the Trust / school does propose to give other gifts then this will only be done in exceptional circumstances and will be at the discretion of the CEO / Headteacher and have prior approval.

## **5. Role of Trust HR in relation to the Gifts and Hospitality Policy**

Trust HR are responsible for:

- communicating to staff the reporting requirements under this policy.

- ensuring that any offer or receipt of gifts, hospitality or donations to staff is recorded in the Trust's Register of Gifts and Hospitality.
- Sending termly reminders regards registering gifts.
- reporting any possible conflict of interests arising from the offer or receipt of gifts and or hospitality.

#### **6. Role of CEO / Headteachers in relation to the Gifts and Hospitality Policy**

CEO / Headteachers are responsible for:

- communicating to staff the reporting requirements under this policy.
- ensuring that any offer or receipt of gifts, hospitality or donations to staff is reported to the Trust CFO.